Activity 1
Discuss the following questions with your partner.

1. What does the national flag of your country look like?
2. What do the colours/designs in your national flag represent? How old is your national flag?
3. Can you describe the national flags of three other countries to your partner?
4. What other organisations have famous flags? (e.g. The Olympic Games)

Activity 2
Complete the sentences with the following words and phrases in the correct form:

white flag   flags/flagstones   Jolly Roger   Stars and Stripes   to flag down   to put the flags out   Union Jack

to flag   flagship   banner   banners   chequered flag

1. Her high-heeled shoes clicked sharply as she walked across the ................. in the entrance hall.
2. Many designer clothes companies have their ......................... stores in Milan.
3. The enemy waved a ......................... to show that they wanted to surrender.
4. Some of the runners in the marathon began ......................... before they reached the half-way point.
5. The ......................... is the flag which represents the United Kingdom.
6. Some websites make their money from ......................... advertisements.
7. The ......................... (otherwise known as the skull and crossbones) is the flag which pirates used to use.
8. The demonstrators on the march were carrying large ................... with aggressive slogans written on them.
9. When he passed his exams his parents ......................... and gave a huge party.
10. As the winning car crossed the finishing line a race official waved the .........................
11. The ......................... is the flag of the USA.
12. When her car broke down she had to ......................... a passing motorist and ask for help.

Activity 3
Use the following questions to begin a conversation with your partner.

1. In what situations do you 'put out the flags'?
2. Have you ever flagged down a car (e.g. a London taxi) or been flagged down (e.g. by the Police)?
3. In what situations does your energy or enthusiasm start flagging (e.g. meetings/lessons/at the end of a busy day/shopping)?
4. Have you ever carried a banner at a demonstration? If not, would you ever carry one? Why/not?
5. Do banner adverts on websites influence you or irritate you?
6. What are the advantages and disadvantages of having a flagstoned floor in your house?
7. In what ways are flagship stores different from other shops in the same chain?
8. Why do you think some people are interested in vexillology (the study of flags)?
9. Which national flags do you think are the most inventive or original? Why?
10. Do you think organisations such as the European Union or the United Nations should spend money designing and developing flags to represent themselves? Why/not?
11. Some politicians in Europe have tried to ban flags with swastikas on them. Do you think the swastika flag should be banned? Why/not?
12. In what situations are flags still used in your country? (e.g. on ships, on buildings, at football matches)
13. Why do some people consider flags to be important?
14. Why do people sometimes burn flags? Do you think flag desecration is a crime?
Activity 4
Go to EnglishClub.com and click on the ‘TP Homework’ icon. Use the information you find there to answer the questions below.

1. Why is British Admiral Horatio Nelson mentioned in the TP homework?
2. Which of the following national flag designs are explained in the TP homework?
   a) UK    b) Brazil    c) Japan    d) USA
3. What is a saltire?
4. What is the answer to the Quick Quiz?

Activity 5

National flags serve no real purpose nowadays: they are useless. Discuss.

If you would like to express your opinion on this subject go to EnglishClub.com and click on the ‘TP Discussion’ icon to take part in the forum discussion there.

N.B. Netiquette! PLEASE CHANGE THE DEFAULT SUBJECT LINE TO INDICATE THE OPINIONS IN YOUR POST BECAUSE IN A BUSY THREAD IT HELPS PEOPLE DECIDE WHICH POSTS TO READ!

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